



Text Message Q&A #198 Ask Rav Aviner: toratravaviner@yahoo.com

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Ha-Rav answers hundreds of text message questions a day. Here's a sample:

Nickname

Q: People call me by my last name instead of my first name and it really bothers me. How do I explain it to them?

A: That it is not your first name and it is forbidden to call someone by a nickname if it bothers him (Megillah 27b. Tosafot ibid. d.h. Velo Keniti. Rambam, Hilchot De'ot 6:8).

Rabbi So-And-So Permits it

Q: Sometimes Ha-Rav answers a question: "Rabbi So-And-So permits it". Does this mean that Ha-Rav does not permit it, or is there some other reason for Ha-Rav turning the questioner over to another Rabbi's answer?

A: It is either because I do not personally permit it or I do permit it but it is a Chiddush and one needs broad shoulders to allow it (Someone once asked the Chazon Ish if it is permissible for someone who suffers from sweating to shower during the 9 Days. He answered: "Reb Elya Dushintzer holds that it is permissible". Ha-Rav Chaim Kanievski wrote that he asked the Chazon Ish about this and he said that he does not permit it. Orchot Rabben Vol. 1, p. 375. And see Shut Igrot Moshe, Even Ha-Ezer 4:84. And Ha-Rav Yehoshua Katz – Rav of Maale Adumim – once asked Ha-Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv a question, and he responded: "Reb Moshe permits it." Rav Katz said: "But I want to know Ha-Rav's opinion." Rav Elyashiv said: "My opinion is that Reb Moshe permits it", i.e. but he does not. And it is related in the book "Oro Shel Olam" p. 343 about Ha-Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach that a woman once came to him after the doctors revealed in prenatal testing that there was a chance that her fetus had a birth defect, and she wanted to have an abortion. It was known that Ha-

Rav Shlomo Zalman was not among those who permitted an abortion in such a case, since he thought that the chance of the baby having a birth defect was low. When he began to talk to the woman about it, he said that his words fell on deaf ears. He said to her: "The truth is that I do not understand this matter so much. I will send you to someone who understands it much more than me. His name is Ha-Rav Eliezer Waldenberg..." Rav Waldenberg – the Tzitz Eliezer – permitted abortion in such a case. See Shut Tzitz Eliezer 9:51, 13:102).

Tefillin for a Vegetarian

Q: I am a vegetarian. Is there a substitute for Tefillin made from animal skin so that I can fulfill the Mitzvah without an animal?

A: No.

Q: How then can I fulfill the Mitzvah?

A: There are times in life when one needs to make a decision. You have to decide if you want to cleave to Hashem or to human inventions.

Combat Soldier and Marriage

Q: Is it correct that a combat soldier should not get married, as it is written: "When a man takes a new wife, he shall not go out in the army, nor shall he be subjected to anything associated with it. He shall remain free for his home for one year and delight his wife, whom he has taken" (Devarim 24:5)?

A: This is incorrect, since everyone, including a newlywed, serves in an obligatory war (Milchemet Mitzvah). It is however a good idea not to serve in a combat unit during one's first year of marriage, since one's young wife will be alone and worried (See the article of Ha-Rav Shmuel Dvir in Techumin Volume 34 where he argues that there is an obligation for a soldier NOT to serve in a combat unit during his first year of marriage).

Local Custom

Q: I am Ashkenazi and Daven in a Sefardi Shul. Should I stand for Kaddish (as is Ashkenazi, but not Sephardi, custom)?

A: Act as everyone else (see Massechet Derech Eretz, Chapter 5: "A person should not stand among those who are seated or sit among those who are standing").

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